

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-23 (withdrawn)

Claims 24-30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (currently amended): An article having first and second surface regions defined by first and second homogeneous layers, respectively, a first layer provided on the first surface region and a second layer provided on the second surface region, each homogeneous layer comprising a carbide of at least one element selected from the group comprising B, Si, Ti, V, Cr, Zr, Nb, Mo, Hf, Ta and W and the element carbon, the first homogeneous layer having a relatively lower proportion of carbon and the second homogeneous layer having a relatively higher proportion of carbon in comparison to the first homogeneous layer, the second surface region having layer providing a lower first coefficient of friction at the second surface region lower than the a second coefficient of friction provided by the first layer at the first surface region.

Claim 32 (currently amended): An article having first and second different surface regions, the first surface region being defined by provided with a first homogeneous layer being formed on the first surface region and the second surface region being provided with a second homogeneous layer being formed on said second surface region, said the first homogeneous layer and said the second homogeneous layer each consisting of a carbide of one or more elements of the group comprising B, Si, Ti, V, Cr, Zr, Nb, Mo, Hf, Ta and W together with the element carbon, there being the first layer having a relatively lower proportion of carbon in said first homogeneous layer than in said the second homogeneous layer and in an amount selected to achieve provide the first layer with a relatively high coefficient of friction, the second layer having at said first surface region and a relatively higher proportion of carbon in said

~~second homogeneous layer~~ in comparison to said the first ~~homogeneous~~ layer and in an amount selected to achieve provide the second layer with a relatively low coefficient of friction at ~~said second surface region~~.

Claim 33 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 32 wherein said one or more elements is boron, said first ~~homogeneous~~ layer on said first surface region containing at least approximately 80 at% boron and a remainder containing 20 at% of carbon and incorporated hydrogen and unavoidable contaminants and said second ~~homogeneous~~ layer on said second surface region containing approximately 55 at% boron and a remainder containing 45 at% of carbon and incorporated hydrogen and unavoidable contaminants.

Claim 34 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 32 wherein said one or more elements is tungsten, said first ~~homogeneous~~ layer on said first surface region containing at least approximately 50 at% tungsten and a remainder containing 50 at% of carbon and incorporated hydrogen and unavoidable contaminants and said second ~~homogeneous~~ layer on said second surface region containing approximately 15 at% tungsten and a remainder containing 85 at% of carbon and incorporated hydrogen and unavoidable contaminants.

Claim 35 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 32 including a bonding layer formed on the said first and second surface regions beneath said respective first and second ~~homogeneous~~ layers.

Claim 36 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 35, wherein the bonding layer has a thickness in the range from about 0.1 μm to about 1 μm on said first and second surface regions.

Claim 37 (currently amended): An article method in accordance with claim 32, wherein the first and second ~~homogeneous~~ layers have a thickness on said first and second surface regions between about 1 μm and 5 μm .

Claim 38 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 32, wherein the second ~~homogeneous~~ layer is a multi-layer structure comprising alternate layers of a carbide

of one or more of the said elements and carbon, a layer thickness of each carbon layer in the alternate layers being in the range between approximately 1 nm and approximately 20 nm.

Claim 39 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 38, wherein a thickness of each carbon layer is in the range from about 2 nm to 4 nm.

Claim 40 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 38, wherein the alternate layers comprise a topmost layer of carbon.

Claim 41 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 38, including a plurality of carbon layers, and wherein the topmost layer of carbon is thicker than other layers of carbon.

Claim 42 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 41, wherein the topmost layer of carbon has a thickness of approximately 500 nm.

Claim 43 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 38, wherein the carbon of the carbon layers has predominantly sp₃ bonds.

Claim 44 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 38, wherein the each of said alternate layers of a carbide layers each have has a thickness in the range between about 1 and 3 nm.

Claim 45 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 44, wherein the each of said alternate layers of a carbide layers each have has a thickness of about 2 nm.

Claim 46 (previously presented): An article in accordance with claim 35, wherein the bonding layer is a layer selected from the group comprising Cr and Ti.

Claim 47 (currently amended): An article in accordance with claim 35, wherein the first and second ~~homogeneous~~ layers have a thickness on said first and second surface regions, including a thickness of said bonding layer, between about 1 μm and 5 μm.

Claim 48 (new): An article in accordance with claim 32 wherein at least one of the first and second layers is a homogeneous layer.